

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A network stack ~~layer~~ interface for communication between software layers during network storage data transfer, the network stack ~~layer~~ interface comprising:

a header portion defining characteristics of the network stack ~~layer~~ interface; and

a buffer descriptor defining data, the buffer descriptor including a memory address pointer to the data, wherein information and the memory address pointer is passed between software ~~network~~ stack layers via the network stack interface;

a first software stack layer creates the network stack interface and passes the network stack interface to another software stack layer, and the buffer descriptor being one of a plurality of buffer descriptors that defines the data that is common to the plurality of buffer descriptors, and the plurality of buffer descriptors define transport layer header data.

2. (Currently amended) A network stack ~~layer~~ interface as recited in claim 1, wherein the header portion includes a common header portion and a layer specific header portion, the specific header portion defining characteristics utilized by a particular related network stack layer.

3. (Currently amended) A network stack ~~layer~~ interface as recited in claim 1, wherein each ~~the~~ buffer descriptor ~~portion~~ further includes buffer length data, the buffer length data defining a size for the data referenced by the memory address pointer.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently amended) A network stack ~~layer~~ interface as recited in claim 5, wherein the command data is SCSI command data.

7. (Currently amended) A network stack ~~layer~~ interface as recited in claim 5, wherein a buffer descriptor from the plurality of buffer descriptors defines storage layer header data.

8. (Currently amended) A network stack ~~layer~~ interface as recited in claim 7, wherein the storage layer header data is storage encapsulation protocol (SEP) header data.

9. (Currently amended) A network stack ~~layer~~ interface as recited in claim 7, wherein a buffer descriptor from the plurality of buffer descriptors defines transport layer header data.

10. (Currently amended) A network stack ~~layer~~ interface as recited in claim 9, wherein the transport layer data is simple transport protocol (STP) header data.

11. -17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently amended) A network stack ~~layer~~ interface for communication between software layers during network storage data transfer, the network stack ~~layer~~ interface comprising:

a header portion defining characteristics of the network stack ~~layer~~ interface; and

a plurality of buffer descriptors ~~descriptor~~, each buffer descriptor defining common data, the plurality of buffer descriptors ~~descriptor~~ including a memory address pointers ~~pointer~~ to the common data, wherein information is passed between software ~~network~~ stack layers via the network stack interface, wherein the buffer descriptors ~~descriptor~~ ~~portion~~ further include ~~includes~~ buffer length data, the buffer length data defining a size for the common data referenced by the memory address pointers ~~pointer~~.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)